

Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
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1. REPORT DATE SEP 2008		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2008 to 00-00-2008	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE AMC Stands Up the New U.S. Army Contracting Command				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Army Acquisition, Logistics & Technology (AT&L),9900 Belvoir Road Suite 101,Fort Belvoir,VA,22060-5567				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 3	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			



AMC Stands Up the New U.S. Army Contracting Command

Sarah Haggerty

The Secretary of the Army (SecArmy) established an independent commission on Army Acquisition and Program Management in Expeditionary Operations on Sept. 24, 2007, to review the lessons learned in recent operations, and provide forward-looking recommendations to ensure that future military operations achieve greater effectiveness, efficiency, and transparency. The commission, chaired by Dr. Jacques S. Gansler, former Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics), is commonly referred to as the “Gansler Commission.” The commission published its comprehensive report, titled *Urgent Reform Required: Army Expeditionary Contracting*, on Oct. 31, 2007. It found that four key improvements were needed to further Army acquisition and program management in expeditionary operations:

- Increase the stature, quantity, and career development of military and civilian contracting personnel (especially for expeditionary operations).
- Restructure organization and restore responsibility to facilitate contracting and contract management in expeditionary and CONUS operations.
- Provide training and tools for overall contracting activities in expeditionary operations.
- Obtain legislative, regulatory, and policy assistance to enable contracting effectiveness in expeditionary operations.

ACC will focus on maintaining and improving the Army's ability to respond globally in support of warfighters' needs. Here, U.S. Army SSG Wayne Dively, C Troop, 2nd Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, provides security during a dismounted patrol near Abu Atham, Iraq. (Photo by TSGT William Greer, Joint Combat Camera Center.)

Based on the commission's second recommendation, the SecArmy directed the U.S. Army Materiel Command (AMC) to activate the new U.S. Army Contracting Command (ACC) on Jan. 30, 2008. Consequently, ACC was stood up provisionally on March 13, 2008, at a ceremony at Fort Belvoir, VA. At the same time, the U.S. Army Contracting Agency (ACA) was realigned to ACC under AMC. With oversight of billions of contract dollars annually, ACC will focus on maintaining and improving the Army's ability to respond globally in support of warfighters' needs. With the realignment of ACA to AMC, most of the Army's contracting resources are contained in one Army command, which will provide a full range of contracting services. The desired end state is a simplification of command relationships that will lead to better oversight of the offices and achieve better management and alignment of contracting authority and responsibility.

ACC (Provisional) is a 2-star level major subordinate command under AMC. ACC includes two subordinate commands: the Expeditionary Contracting Command (ECC), a 1-star level command focused on contracting support to forward-deployed forces, and the Installation Contracting

Command (ICC), a 1-star level command focused on contracting support for CONUS installations. The establishment of ACC consolidates Army expeditionary and installation contracting worldwide along with the mission of AMC's acquisition centers.

ACC

ACC's mission is to provide global contracting support to warfighters in garrison and through the full spectrum of military operations. ACC will provide this support to Army and federal organizations at CONUS and OCONUS installations with assigned contracting organizations. The centralization of command and control functions provides standardized policies and procedures, training, personnel management, deployment processes, and other common functions across the command's three components.

The ACC will comprise both military and civilian personnel at locations worldwide, who award more than 270,000 contractual actions per fiscal year. The ACC commander will provide leadership and control for obligating the Army's largest portion of contracting dollars. By standing up ACC and its subordinate commands, changes such as improved training and oversight, recognition of contracting as

an Army core competency, standardization of policies and processes, and upgrades to methods of contracting and contract management, will enhance the Army's ability to conduct its contracting

mission. ACC's Mission Essential Task List is:

- Provide worldwide contracting services.
- Provide command and control/support for ECC and ICC.
- Train the force.
- Protect the force.
- Integrate safety and risk management.

ECC

ECC's mission is to provide effective and agile expeditionary contracting across the full spectrum of military operations for the Army Service Component Commands and Joint warfighters, and provide effective and responsive contracting support to the Army and other federal organizations at OCONUS installations.

The ECC will provide contracting support to deployed warfighters through a modular structure of contingency contracting teams, and command and control through contingency contracting battalions and contracting support brigades. Installation contracting is provided through OCONUS directorates of contracting. The ECC commander, and a portion of the headquarters staff, will also deploy in support of large-scale military operations when required.

The ECC staff performs tasks supporting both the command's operational and procurement support missions, including: managing the Army Force Generation process whereby the commander prepares and certifies contingency contracting personnel and units as ready for deployment as part of the Army force pool, preparing the unit status reports, and managing training.

ICC

ICC's mission is to provide effective and responsive contracting support to



AMC, under GEN Benjamin S. Griffin (left), stands up the ACC (Provisional) March 13, 2008, at Fort Belvoir, under the leadership of ACC Executive Director Jeffrey P. Parsons (center), as AMC's CSM Jeffrey J. Mellinger looks on. (U.S. Army photo by J.D. Leipold.)



GEN Benjamin S. Griffin transfers the flag representing the ACC (Provisional) to its new Executive Director, Jeffrey P. Parsons, at a ceremony March 13, 2008. (U.S. Army photo by Wayne Scanlon.)

the Army and other federal organizations at CONUS installations, and provide enterprise contracting support for common-use information technology (IT) hardware, software, and services on behalf of Army and DOD organizations. ICC provides contracting support for the U.S. Army Installation Management Command, U.S. Army Forces Command, and U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command CONUS installations, as well as support of all common-use IT hardware, software, and services. ICC will play an integral part in training the contracting force, and will be responsible for integrating safety and risk management into all of its operations. The ICC commander leads both the command's operational and procurement support missions.

Human Resources Strategy

ACC plans to hire additional contracting personnel in an effort to expand a workforce that was too small and not prepared to deal with the heavy demands of the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. These military and civilian contracting personnel will represent about a 25-percent increase in the workforce to manage contractor employees and the thousands of contractual actions. It's expected to take 2 to 3 years to hire and train all of the personnel.

Success Indicators

The Army created the ACC to correct significant deficiencies in Army contracting support to contingency operations. The realignment of ACA and the creation of the ECC are extraordinary steps to immediately redress the credibility of Army contracting personnel

and procedures. A key aspect of making these changes in the contracting field is ensuring that the Army is obtaining the desired result.

There are various success indicators available for ACC to measure the top-level organization-specific shortcomings. The primary indicators used today include Procurement Management Assistance Program (PMAP) reviews and regular performance assessments of contracting metrics. An enabler to measure success includes serving as the functional proponent for the Contracting and Acquisition Career Program (CP-14) and the Central Procurement Operations Account Management Decision Package.

Periodic reviews of ACC contracting activities and processes are necessary to ascertain what is working well and what areas require management attention. In addition to policies and practices, workforce development, staffing, and appropriate applications of automation are also part of the reviews. The PMAP's primary goals are to:

- Provide recommendations on ways to improve contracting operations.
- Assess the overall level of customer support and satisfaction.
- Assess the degree of sound business judgment exercised.

- Collect and share best practices for dissemination to other ACC contracting activities.
- Identify any policies and other initiatives that may create problems in contract execution.

Another primary indicator of success is regular performance assessment of ACC contracting metrics to ascertain how well the subordinate offices have performed in specific areas, as well as determine which areas require management attention. Metrics are a crucial element in the development and establishment of ACC strategic goals. The strategic perspectives of the ACC contracting metrics focus on the customer, internal business practices, learning/growth, and finances. ACC headquarters (HQ) will collect, consolidate, review, and report the performance results with each subordinate office on a regular basis.

HQ AMC and the ACC commander will monitor performance indicators and work with the Army Staff and Army Acquisition Corps leadership to ensure that the Army obtains the level of contracting support needed to perform its missions. The formation of ACC will lead to better oversight of the offices and achieve better management and alignment of contracting authority and responsibility. ACC will provide world-class contracting support to warfighters — whenever and wherever — to meet their needs.

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